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SUBJECT: RUSSIA WANTS "PREDICTABILITY" IN POST-START
ARRANGEMENT

REF: STATE 169770

Classified By: Minister-Counselor for Political Affairs Alice G. Wells.
Reasons 1.4 (B/D).

11. (S) Russia will insist on predictability in any arrangement that follows expiration of the START Treaty in 2009, according to Vasiliy Boryak, Chief of the START Office in the Foreign Ministry's Department for Disarmament and Security Affairs. First and foremost, Boryak told us December 7, was Russia's desire to retain a specific list of limitations in the new accord, with subsequent negotiation of numerical ceilings on warheads. In this respect, Boryak noted that Russia's position had not changed significantly since it presented a set of START review proposals last summer.

12. (S) Boryak underlined that predictability remained a fundamental tenet of U.S.-Russia arms control relations; at a minimum, Moscow needed to be assured of future trend lines on numerical ceilings, which was not clear in refTel letter to Deputy Foreign Minister Kislyak from U/S Joseph. Boryak also emphasized our respective obligations under Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Both Russia and the U.S. would likely come under increasing pressure to reduce further the level of nuclear weapons.

13. (S) Boryak said DFM Kislyak would respond formally to U/S Joseph's letter when they meet December 8. In addition to insisting on limitations on launch platforms and warheads, Kislyak will note that:

-- Moscow is not opposed to visits to operational sites but would insist that the purpose be clearly defined. In this respect, Boryak foresaw tough negotiations on specific locations and on defining strategic weapons.

-- Site visits at nuclear test facilities would not be appropriate.

-- There should be a verification mechanism, though it could be less burdensome than existing provisions in the START Treaty.

-- There should be no deployment of nuclear weapons outside respective national territory.

14. (S) None of these was an insurmountable obstacle, in Boryak's view. Differences in approach have always characterized U.S.-Russia arms control relations. Kislyak, Boryak noted, was confident that both sides would be able to establish a level of trust necessary to reach agreement. Boryak added that Kislyak valued his relationship with U/S Joseph.

